

selected from a list of categories, under which the item for auction is to be listed, and (ii) input relating to scheduling an auction for the item;

*FX*  
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*BI*  
processing at least a portion of the received information into a presentation format by a database-to-presentation format formatting program, the presentation format including an indication of the category of the item for auction;

based at least in part on the received auction scheduling input, conducting an auction for the item over the Internet by presenting the presentation format to a plurality of potential bidders;

receiving at the host computer at least one bid on the auctioned item from a bidder [second participant for the auction item]; and

receiving at a host computer payment information from the bidder [second participant].

*BI*  
12. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 11 further comprising:  
passing the received payment information from a host computer to an external clearinghouse; and  
receiving at a host computer a response from the external clearinghouse that payment has cleared.

13. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 11 wherein the database-to-presentation formatting program comprises a database-to-worldwide web mapping module.

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*BI*  
14. (THREE TIMES AMENDED) The method of claim 11 further comprising:

*ES* *PM* receiving payment information from the bidder [second participant] via a worldwide web page server executing on the host computer.

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15. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 11 further comprising:  
processing the received payment information with a transaction processor to debit  
an account identified by the payment information.

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*ES* *PM* 16. (TWICE AMENDED) The method of claim 11 further comprising:  
associating the payment information with the bid received from the bidder  
[second participant].

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17. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 11 wherein the payment information  
identifies a credit card account.

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*ES* *PM* 18. (TWICE AMENDED) The method of claim 11 wherein the information received  
from the seller [first participant] includes a price for the auction item.

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19. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 11 wherein the presentation format  
comprises a hyper text markup language format.

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*ES* *PM* 20. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer-implemented method of conducting auctions  
on the internet, the method comprising:

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receiving information about an item to be auctioned, the received information including (i) a designation of a category, selected from a list of categories, under which the item is to be auctioned, and (ii) input relating to scheduling an auction for the item;

generating a tracking identifier to identify the item to be auctioned;

processing at least a portion of the received information to create a presentation format corresponding to the item to be auctioned, the presentation format including an indication of the category of the item to be auctioned;

based at least in part on the received auction scheduling input, conducting an auction for the item over the Internet by presenting the presentation format to a plurality of internet participants;

receiving at least one bid for the item from at least one internet participant;

providing to the internet participant instructions for sending payment information to pay for the auctioned item.

21. (TWICE AMENDED) The method of claim 20 **[further comprising:]**  
wherein conducting an auction for the item comprises opening an auction process to participants on the internet; and further comprising  
automatically closing the auction process to the internet participants based on a predetermined condition.

22. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 20 further comprising:  
receiving the bid for the auctioned item via a world wide web page server interface.

23. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 20 further comprising:  
receiving payment information from the participant, the payment information  
being associated with the bid.

24. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 20 further comprising:  
receiving from the participant payment information identifying a credit card  
account, passing the credit card account information to a clearinghouse and receiving  
authorization from the clearinghouse that payment with the credit card has cleared.

25. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 20 further comprising:  
receiving payment information from the participant, clearing the payment  
information, and transferring legal ownership of the item to the participant.

33. (TWICE AMENDED) A system for conducting auctions on the internet, the  
system comprising:

an auction item presentation means for presenting items for auction to auction  
participants connected via the internet, the auction item presentation means presenting items for  
auction arranged into item categories, each item for auction being associated with an item  
category designated by a seller of the item to be auctioned;

an auction process means for executing an auction process for the item based at least in  
part on scheduling input received from the seller;

an auction bid recipient means for receiving, during the auction process, at least one bid  
for an item being presented by the auction item presentation means; and

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payment recipient means for receiving payment information from a bidding participant,  
the payment information corresponding to the item for which the bid was received.

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34. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 33 further comprising payment  
verification means for passing received payment information to an external clearinghouse for  
verification.

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35. (TWICE AMENDED) The system of claim 33 wherein the auction item  
presentation means comprises a database-to-presentation formatting program for mapping  
information from a database into a worldwide web format [comprises a database-to-worldwide  
web mapping program].


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36. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 33 further comprising:  
a transaction processor to debit an account identified by the payment information if the  
received bid is approved.

37. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 33 wherein the received payment  
information identifies a credit card.

38. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 36 wherein the payment information  
identifies a credit card and wherein the transaction processor charges the credit card for the  
payment associated with the approved bid.

 39. The system of claim 33 wherein the auction item presentation means presents the auction item information as a markup language page.

 40. (TWICE AMENDED) An auction participant system for enabling participation in an online auction conducted over a packet-switched network, the auction participants including sellers of items to be auctioned and bidders on the items to be auctioned, the system comprising:

 an auction item receiving means for receiving a page of information including one or more items available for auction, the received page of information including a designation of item categories with which the items for auction are associated, each seller designating an item category for that seller's item to be auctioned;

an auction process means for executing an auction process corresponding to the item based at least in part on scheduling input received from the seller;

an auction bid input means for inputting a bid for at least one of the items presented in the received page and for inputting payment information associated with the bid; and

bid transmission means for transmitting the bid and payment information via the packet-switched network to a remote bid processor system.

41. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 40 wherein the received page comprises a markup language page and wherein the auction item receiving means comprises a web browser connected via the internet to a server at the remote bid processor system.

42. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 40 wherein the payment information identifies a credit card provided by the auction participant to pay for the item in the amount of the bid.

43. (TWICE AMENDED) A system for auctioning a uniquely identified item over a packet-switched network, the system comprising:

a database of data records, each data record relating to an item and comprising an identifier to uniquely identify the item and an item category, designated by a seller of the item, under which the item is to be offered for auction;

an auction system, accessible by a plurality of participants via the packet-switched network, that presents an item for auction by providing a mark-up language page of information corresponding to an item that is available for auction during a specified time, the mark-up language page of information including an indication of the item's category;

wherein the auction system executes an auction process corresponding to the item based at least in part on scheduling input received from the seller of the item, receives bids from one or more of the participants over the packet-switched network and terminates the auction when one or more predetermined criteria are satisfied; and

wherein the auction system transmits to a selected auction participant information about where the selected auction participant should submit payment information for the auctioned item.

44. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 43 wherein the auction system refuses to accept bids after the one or more predetermined criteria have been satisfied.

45. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 43 wherein the auction system comprises a web page server interface for receiving bids from auction participants connected to the auction system via the world wide web.

46. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 43 wherein the auction system receives payment information with each bid.

47. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 46 wherein the auction system receives payment information identifying a credit card account, and transmits the credit card account information to a remote verification system before processing the bid.

48. (ONCE AMENDED) The system of claim 47 wherein the auction system selects a bid based on the one or more predetermined criteria, processes the credit card account for the amount of the bid, and transfers legal ownership of the item to the participant that submitted the bid.

49. (TWICE AMENDED) An auction participation system, in communication with an auction processor that processes bids for items being auctioned, for enabling participation in an online auction over a packet-switched network the auction participation system comprising:  
an auction page recipient means that receives from a server at the auction processor a page containing information about at least one item being auctioned, the received page including a designation of an item category with which the at least one item being auctioned is associated, the item category being specified by a seller of the item;

an auction process means for conducting an internet-based auction of the item based at least in part on scheduling input received from the seller of the item;

bid input means for enabling a participant to input a bid for submission to the auction processor via the packet-switched network;



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*cont*  
*D1*

bid award receiving means for receiving an indication that the bid was awarded to the participant; and  
payment information input means for enabling the participant to input payment information in response to receiving a bid award.

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50. The system of claim 49 wherein the auction page receiving means comprises a web browser system that accesses a server at the auction processor to receive the page.

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*FI 11*  
*BY*

51. (AMENDED) The system of claim 49 wherein the auction participation system receives payment information with each bid.

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52. (TWICE AMENDED) The system of claim 51 wherein the auction participation system receives payment information identifying a credit card account and transmits the credit card account information to a verification system before processing the bid.

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*D1*

53. (TWICE AMENDED) The system of claim 52 wherein the auction participation system selects a bid based on one or more predetermined criteria, processes the credit card account for the amount of the bid and transfers legal ownership of the item to the participant that submitted the bid.

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54. (TWICE AMENDED) A system for facilitating commerce at an internet-based auction, the system comprising:

auction item receiving means for receiving from one or more auction participants information regarding an item to be posted for an auction, the received information including a

designation of a category, selected from a list of categories, under which the item is to be auctioned;

7/12  
Cont  
auction processor means for processing information received by the auction item receiving means and presenting the processed information in a format to be transmitted to auction participants over a packet-switched network, the format including an indication of the category of the item to be auctioned, the auction processor means including an auction process means for executing an auction process for the item based at least in part on scheduling input received from the seller of the item; and

bid receiving means for receiving bids for the item presented to auction participants.

55. (TWICE AMENDED) A computer-implemented method of facilitating internet auctions, the method comprising:

receiving information from a seller including (i) information about an item to be auctioned at a computer system programmed to receive information over a communication network, and (ii) input relating to scheduling an auction for the item, the auction item information including a selection of a predetermined category, the predetermined category selected by the seller from a predetermined list of categories maintained by the computer system;

based on at least a portion of the [in response to receiving auction item] information received from a seller, generating a unique item identifier by a program executing on the computer system;

notifying the seller of the unique item identifier generated in response to receiving information about the item to be auctioned;

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*cont*

*DI*

based at least in part on the received auction scheduling input, auctioning the item at the computer system with an auction process program, the auction process program indicating the predetermined category selected by the seller and identifying the item to be auctioned; [and] presenting the auction to a plurality of auction participants via a computer network in response to a request to display information about the item to be auctioned, the request to display the item's information being processed by a computer program executing on the computer system; and receiving at the computer system at least one bid on the item being auctioned, the computer system updating a display of the item's information in response to receipt of the at least one bid.

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64. The method of claim 55 wherein the information received from a seller further comprises an item subcategory, selected by the seller from a list of item subcategories, under which the item is to be offered for auction.

65. The method of claim 55 wherein the information received from a seller comprises a verbal description of the item or a graphical depiction of the item or both.

66. The method of claim 55 wherein the information received from a seller comprises a verbal description of the item, the verbal description including subjective information supplied by the seller.

67. The method of claim 66 wherein the subjective information includes one or more of following: condition of the item being offered for auction, authenticity of the item being offered for auction or special features of the item being offered for auction.

68. The method of claim 55 wherein, prior to supplying information, the seller registers to sell items for auction.

69. The method of claim 68 wherein registering the seller comprises receiving identity information from the seller.

70. The method of claim 68 wherein registering the seller comprises receiving financial information from the seller.

71. The method of claim 68 wherein registering the seller comprises opening a debit / credit account for the seller.

72. The method of claim 71 further comprising debiting the seller's account by an amount corresponding to a seller's fee.

73. The method of claim 71 further comprising crediting the seller's account by an amount corresponding to the purchase price of an item sold at auction.

74. The method of claim 55 wherein the seller logs into the auction computer system from a computing platform in order to provide information about an item to be auctioned.

75. The method of claim 74 wherein the seller's computing platform comprises a personal computer, a workstation, a cable set-top device, a video game system or a portable computing device.

76. The method of claim 55 wherein an auction participant logs into the auction computer system from a computing platform in order to browse or bid on items offered for auction.

77. The method of claim 76 wherein the auction participant's computing platform comprises a personal computer, a workstation, a cable set-top device, a video game system or a portable computing device.

78. The method of claim 55 wherein the seller-provided information includes a reserve price for the item to be auctioned.

79. The method of claim 78 wherein the seller's reserve price is not revealed to auction participants.

80. The method of claim 55 wherein prior to bidding on an item an auction participant browses the predetermined list of categories to search for desired items on which to place bids.

81. The method of claim 55 wherein the seller ships an item purchased at auction to a destination specified by the purchasing auction participant.

82. The method of claim 55 wherein the seller-provided information includes an indication from the seller whether the item offered for auction is to be advertised to potential bidders.

83. The method of claim 82 wherein the advertisement appears on a main web page maintained by the auction computer system.

84. The method of claim 83 wherein the main web page comprises a welcome page.

85. The method of claim 55 further comprising notifying an auction participant that a bid by that participant has been accepted.

86. The method of claim 55 wherein an auction participant makes electronic payment for an item purchased at auction.

87. The method of claim 86 wherein an auction participant makes electronic payment by providing credit card or debit card information.

88. The method of claim 86 wherein an auction participant makes electronic payment by providing electronic funds transfer information.

89. The method of claim 86 wherein an auction participant makes electronic payment using e-money.

90. The method of claim 55 wherein the seller-provided information includes a specified time period for the auction.

91. The method of claim 55 wherein the auction process program indicates an opening bid for an item offered for auction.

92. The method of claim 55 wherein the auction process program indicates a current bid for an item offered for auction.

93. The method of claim 55 wherein presenting the auction to the plurality of auction participants comprises displaying one or more of the following: a verbal description of the item offered for auction, a graphical depiction of the item offered for auction, or bid information relating to the item offered for auction.

94. The method of claim 55 wherein presenting the auction to the plurality of auction participants further comprises displaying advertisements to the plurality of users.

95. The method of claim 94 wherein the displayed advertisements relate to items offered for auction.

96. The method of claim 94 wherein the displayed advertisements relate to goods / services offered by a third party.

97. The method of claim 55 wherein the computer system updates the display of the item's information each time a bid higher than the current bid is received.

98. The method of claim 55 further comprising obtaining an auction participant's assent to terms of sale before accepting bids from that auction participant.

99. The method of claim 98 wherein the auction participant's assent is supplied via the Internet.

133. (ONCE AMENDED) A computer-implemented method of facilitating Internet-based electronic auctions, the method comprising:

receiving information from a seller of an item to be auctioned, the information including  
(i) information identifying the item to be auctioned and designating an item category selected by the seller from a list of item categories, and (ii) input relating to scheduling an auction for the item;

storing at least a portion of the received information in a database of information relating to items to be auctioned;

mapping at least a portion of the received information stored in the database into a presentation format that includes the identifying information and the item category provided by the seller;

displaying the presentation format to a plurality of buyers [the identity of the item to be auctioned in the designated item category];



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based at least in part on the received auction scheduling input, conducting an online auction for the item including receiving bids on the item from one or more of the plurality of buyers; and terminating the online auction of the item based on a predetermined condition.

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134. The method of claim 133 further comprising notifying a winning buyer that a bid submitted by the winning buyer was a winning bid.

135. The method of claim 133 wherein the information received from the seller identifying the item to be auctioned includes at least one of an item title and an item description.

136. The method of claim 135 wherein the item description includes an electronic image of the item.

137. The method of claim 133 wherein receiving information from a seller further comprises receiving information designating an item subcategory selected by the seller from among a list of item subcategories.

138. The method of claim 133 wherein the predetermined condition based on which the online auction is terminated comprises an occurrence of an auction termination time.

139. The method of claim 133 wherein receiving information from a seller further comprises receiving a reserve price for the item to be auctioned.

140. The method of claim 139 wherein the predetermined condition based on which the online auction is terminated comprises an occurrence of the reserve price being met.

141. The method of claim 134 wherein notifying the winning buyer comprises sending the winning buyer an e-mail message.

142. The method of claim 133 further comprising notifying the seller of an outcome of the online auction.

143. The method of claim 142 wherein notifying the seller comprises sending the seller an e-mail message.

144. The method of claim 143 wherein the seller is notified of the winning buyer's identity.

145. (ONCE AMENDED) The method of claim 133 **[further comprising]** wherein receiving information from the seller of the item to be auctioned further comprises receiving input relating to **[placement of]** an advertisement for the item.

146. (ONCE AMENDED) A computer-implemented method of facilitating Internet-based electronic auctions, the method comprising:

receiving information via the Internet from sellers of items to be auctioned, each seller providing (i) information describing an item to be auctioned and designating an item category

and an item subcategory selected by the seller from a list of item categories and subcategories, and (ii) input relating to scheduling an auction for the item; **[and]**

*Fig 19 cont*  
storing at least a portion of the received information in a database of information relating to items to be auctioned;

*YI*  
displaying the list of item categories and subcategories via the Internet to a plurality of potential buyers, each potential buyer being able to browse the item categories and subcategories selectively to search for a desired item offered for auction; and

for each item to be auctioned: (i) mapping the received information stored in the database corresponding to the item into a presentation format that includes the identifying information and the item category provided by the item's seller; (ii) displaying the presentation format to a plurality of buyers; (iii) based at least in part of the received auction scheduling input, conducting an online auction for the item including receiving bids on the item from one or more of the plurality of buyers; and (iv) terminating the online auction of the item based on a predetermined condition.

**[receiving bids from potential buyers on desired items offered for auction.]**

147. The method of claim 11 or 26 wherein the communication handler program comprises a Unix daemon.

Please add new claims 148-218 as follows:

*Fig 15*  
--148. (NEW) The method of claim 11 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.  
*YI*

149. (NEW) The method of claim 11 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

150. (NEW) The method of claim 11 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

151. (NEW) The method of claim 11 wherein the received auction scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

152. (NEW) The method of claim 11 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be invoked by the seller manually.

153. (NEW) The method of claim 11 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be initiated at a future time.

154. (NEW) The method of claim 20 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

155. (NEW) The method of claim 20 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

156. (NEW) The method of claim 20 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

157. (NEW) The method of claim 20 wherein the received auction scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

158. (NEW) The method of claim 20 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be invoked by the seller manually.

159. (NEW) The method of claim 20 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be initiated at a future time.

160. (NEW) The system of claim 33 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

161. (NEW) The system of claim 33 wherein the received scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

162. (NEW) The system of claim 33 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

163. (NEW) The system of claim 33 wherein the received scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

164. (NEW) The system of claim 33 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be invoked by the seller manually.

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165. (NEW) The system of claim 33 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be initiated at a future time.

166. (NEW) The system of claim 40 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

167. (NEW) The system of claim 40 wherein the received scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

168. (NEW) The system of claim 40 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

169. (NEW) The system of claim 40 wherein the received scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

170. (NEW) The system of claim 40 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be invoked by the seller manually.

171. (NEW) The system of claim 40 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be initiated at a future time.

172. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

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173. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the received scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

174. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

175. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the received scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

176. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be invoked by the seller manually.

177. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be initiated at a future time.

178. (NEW) The system of claim 49 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

179. (NEW) The system of claim 49 wherein the received scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

180. (NEW) The system of claim 49 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

181. (NEW) The system of claim 49 wherein the received scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

182. (NEW) The system of claim 49 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be invoked by the seller manually.

183. (NEW) The system of claim 49 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be initiated at a future time.

184. (NEW) The system of claim 54 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

185. (NEW) The system of claim 54 wherein the received scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

186. (NEW) The system of claim 54 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

187. (NEW) The system of claim 54 wherein the received scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction process is to be started immediately.

188. (NEW) The system of claim 54 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be invoked by the seller manually.



189. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the received scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction process is to be initiated at a future time.

190. (NEW) The method of claim 55 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

191. (NEW) The method of claim 55 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

192. (NEW) The method of claim 55 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

193. (NEW) The method of claim 55 wherein the received auction scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

194. (NEW) The method of claim 55 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be invoked by the seller manually.

195. (NEW) The method of claim 55 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be initiated at a future time.

196. (NEW) The method of claim 133 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

197. (NEW) The method of claim 133 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

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198. (NEW) The method of claim 133 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

199. (NEW) The method of claim 133 wherein the received auction scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

200. (NEW) The method of claim 133 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be invoked by the seller manually.

201. (NEW) The method of claim 133 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be initiated at a future time.

202. (NEW) The method of claim 146 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

203. (NEW) The method of claim 146 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

204. (NEW) The method of claim 146 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

205. (NEW) The method of claim 146 wherein the received auction scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

206. (NEW) The method of claim 146 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be invoked by the seller manually.

207. (NEW) The method of claim 146 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be initiated at a future time.

208. (NEW) The method of claim 21 wherein the predetermined condition is defined at least in part by the received auction scheduling input.

209. (NEW) The system of claim 43 wherein the one or more predetermined criteria are defined at least in part by the received scheduling input.

210. (NEW) The method of claim 133 wherein the predetermined condition is defined at least in part by the received auction scheduling input.

211. (NEW) The method of claim 146 wherein the predetermined condition is defined at least in part by the received auction scheduling input.

212. (NEW) A computer-implemented method of facilitating Internet-based auctions, the method comprising:

receiving input from a seller of an item to be auctioned, the received input including an identification of the item to be auctioned and input relating to scheduling an auction for the item; and

initiating an online auction for the item based at least in part on the auction scheduling input received from the seller.

213. (NEW) The method of claim 212 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to an auction duration.

214. (NEW) The method of claim 212 wherein the received auction scheduling input relates to one or both of an auction starting time and an auction ending time.

215. (NEW) The method of claim 212 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

216. (NEW) The method of claim 212 wherein the received auction scheduling input consists of an indication that the auction is to be started immediately.

217. (NEW) The method of claim 212 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be invoked by the seller manually.

218. (NEW) The method of claim 212 wherein the received auction scheduling input comprises an indication that the auction is to be initiated at a future time.--